

VZCZCXR05039
OO RUEHDA
DE RUEHAK #0215/01 0321534
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 011534Z FEB 07
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0799
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC//PA
RUEUITH/ODC ANKARA TU
INFO RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 7780
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 2038
RUEHDA/AMCONSUL ADANA 1606
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS 5711
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 5451
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2089
RUEUITH/DET 1 39LG ANKARA TU
RHMFIUU/USDOCO 6ATAF IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39OSS INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 523 IZMIR TU
RHMFIUU/39ABG INCIRLIK AB TU
RHMFIUU/AFOSI DET 522 INCIRLIK AB TU
RUEUITH/AFLO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ANKARA 000215

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EUR/SE, EUR/PD, NEA/PD, DRL
JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPRC KMDR TU

SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT
FEBRUARY 1, 2007

In Today's Papers

Papers Want Police Chiefs Removed in Dink Case
Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Vatan, Radikal, Cumhuriyet and others lash out at the ruling AKP government for not removing from office police chiefs Celalettin Cerrah and Ramazan Akyurek during the investigation of the killing of Turkish-Armenian writer Hrant Dink. Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu has said he will not sack the two before the investigation is completed. Cumhuriyet reports Ramazan Akyurek, the head of the police intelligence department, is known to be close to the Fettullah Gulen community. On Wednesday, a seventh suspect, Salih Hacisalihoglu, was detained in the Black Sea city of Trabzon for the Dink murder. Papers say that if Yasin Hayal, the man behind the hitman Ogun Samast, had been given a heavier penalty for his 2004 bombing of a McDonald's restaurant in Trabzon, he would have been blocked from preparing for the murder of Dink. Hayal was released from prison after serving merely 10 months.

Ralston Meets Buyukanit, Departs Turkey

Hurriyet, Milliyet, Sabah, Radikal, Cumhuriyet, Zaman, Yeni Safak and others report the US anti-terror special envoy Joseph Ralston proposed at yesterday's meeting with Turkish General Staff (TGS) Chief Yasar Buyukanit dialogue with the northern Iraqi Kurdish administration against the PKK. Buyukanit said the US must take concrete steps forward for persuading the Turkish nation that Americans are actually struggling against the PKK. Cumhuriyet claims Ralston has suggested the regional Kurdish government "president" Massoud Barzani that peshmerge forces be used against the PKK in northern Iraq. Barzani, however, rejected the suggestion, and instead wants a general amnesty for the PKK as well as dialogue between Turkey and the Kurdish administration in the north. Turkish diplomatic sources told Cumhuriyet the US was pressing Baghdad to appoint a Kurd as Iraq's special envoy for countering the PKK. Hurriyet says Ralston mentioned to Turks three new measures against the PKK; that the US will take hardline action to cut the financial support flowing to the PKK from Europe, that the logistic support extended to the PKK by Kurdish groups in

northern Iraq will be cut, and that the PKK militants will not be allowed to go to towns and villages in northern for food and medical treatment.

Editorial Commentary on Turkey-Iraq Oil Dispute, Turkey-Northern Iraq Ties

Soli Ozel comments in the mass appeal Sabah: "Turkey prefers to remain distant and to stay away from coming up with new strategies and new policies when it comes to dealing with unpleasant realities.

This attitude simply ties Turkey's hands. On the Iraq issue, there are many hard-line messages given to the public which make the use of reasonable options practically out of question. During the recent oil issue with Iraq, a Turkish businessman felt tired of the lack of a proper strategy and could not help but complain, saying 'We have to come up with a strategy -- Kurdistan is becoming a reality and Turkey is still dragging on with the usual rhetoric. You cannot solve anything with aggressive language.' The Arab part of Iraq is rapidly moving toward a civil war, and Turkey continues to fail to analyze the current reality with common sense and reason.

What is our policy if Turkey is faced with terrorism, refugees, increasing economic problems and radicalism in the region? This is the time when we are in need of common wisdom to be able to discuss even the most unacceptable and out-of-the-ordinary scenarios."

Sami Kohen comments in the mainstream Milliyet: "Turkey continues to engage in direct trade relations with Northern Iraq, yet at the same time tends to ignore and avoid the official figures there. Ankara pursues a double standard on Iraq because we recognize the Iraqi regime as legitimate but disapprove of the regional administration in the north which was shaped by the constitution of Iraq. Characterization of Iraqi Kurds as 'our kin' just like the Turkmen, yet treating them like enemies is another example of double

ANKARA 00000215 002 OF 003

talk. Turkey needs the help of the Northern Iraqi administration in order to end the presence of the PKK there. However Turkey also fails to let them play their role within the Special Envoy mechanism. Turkey's Iraq policy requires fine tuning based on the realities of Iraq and also requires efforts to establish constructive dialogue as well as new approaches."

Syrian FM Visits Ankara

All papers report visiting Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallim met with President Sezer, Prime Minister Erdogan, and Foreign Minister Gul in Ankara. Papers say Muallim conveyed a message from President Assad to Erdogan that Syria and Turkey should be "more active" concerning Iraq. He told the press before departing Ankara yesterday that President Bush's new Iraq strategy will not solve any problem through increasing troops in the region. Muallim said there is an extremely complicated structure in Iraq which cannot be handled by a single country, including the US.

Armenian Genocide Bill Likely Strain to Turkey-US Ties

Sabah expects Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul to convey three messages to the US Administration during an upcoming visit to Washington on February 4-9: The approval of the Armenian genocide bill will end the strategic partnership between Turkey and the US; that Armenia should also open its archives to researchers; and that the US should back the Turkish proposal for forming a joint commission of historians. Gul is expected to meet Secretary Rice, National Security Adviser Stephen Hadley, and the head of foreign relations committee Tom Lantos. Meanwhile, papers report US Ambassador to Turkey, Ross Wilson, said in a statement Wednesday that the Bush administration's position on the Armenian genocide issue has not changed. "The Administration will be actively involved with the Congress to oppose this resolution," said Wilson.

Turkey Warns over Oil Crisis between Cypriots

Despite Turkish warnings, Milliyet reports the Greek Cypriots have sent a delegation to Texas in an effort to seek cooperation with US oil giants with regard to oil exploration in eastern Mediterranean. Nicosia has earlier signed oil exploration agreements with Lebanon and Syria, but the two countries have been warned by Turkey not to proceed with the deals, stressing that Turkey and Turkish Cypriots also had rights in the region.

Turkish Cyprus "Prime Minister" Ferdi Sabit Soyer warned President

Papadopoulos regarding oil reserves predicted to be around Cyprus. "Papadopoulos has invited evil to Mediterranean, offering the USD 400 billion worth of oil to countries such as France, China, and Russia in an effort to strengthen his position in the UN Security Council. The US, UK, and Israel will not remain bystanders to the developments. This policy will drag Cyprus into a conflict in the type of the Middle East and Iraq," Soyer emphasized. On Thursday, Turkish televisions reported Turkey sent warships to east Mediterranean offshore Cyprus to patrol the disputed areas. Turkish General Staff chief (TGS) General Yasar Buyukanit denied reports, saying Turkey already had warships in the region. Papers also report Cyprus said it will protest Turkey's warnings over Nicosia's oil exploration plans with littoral Mediterranean states at the UN and EU platforms.

Matt Bryza Urges Turkey to be Patient on PKK Issue

Hurriyet reports that US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matt Bryza talked to Hurriyet in Washington and said "We have not produced a concrete result on the PKK yet, but we know very well what we should be doing. If you have some patience, you will see the results soon." Bryza added that there will be no need for Turkey to send troops to Northern Iraq if the US produces some concrete results. The north is the safest part of Iraq. Naturally, we don't want Turkish interference there. Therefore, we should fulfill our promises on the elimination of the PKK, Bryza stressed. On the so-called Armenian genocide issue, Bryza said "The November 7 elections have changed everything. We have to be engaged at the top levels through new tactics. We are doing our best. I, personally,

ANKARA 00000215 003 OF 003

spend every minute of my free time thinking of ways to obstruct the passage of the resolution. In any case, I can say that there will be no changes in President Bush's traditional April 24 speech." Bryza reiterated that the US Administration trusts Turkish democracy and that "the annulment of Article 301 would strengthen Turkey on every front."

Prof. Kaboglu's Request for Protection Rejected

Radikal reports that Istanbul Governorate rejected the former chairman of the Prime Ministry Human Rights Commission, Prof Ibrahim Kaboglu's request for protection. Just like Hrant Dink, Kaboglu as well, was tried under the Article 301 for preparing a "Report on Minorities." During his trial, Kaboglu received countless threats through phone and e-mail. These threats forced him to request protection in January 2006. However, his request was rejected by the Istanbul Governorate, and he still is not under protection.

TV Highlights
NTV, 6.00 A.M.

Domestic News

- A row between Turkey and Iraq over the shipment of petroleum products has been resolved after Iraq's state oil company SOMO said in a letter to Ankara the old regime will be applied regarding oil trade between the two countries.

- Professor Baskin Oran says he feared for his life because of a speech describing the Kurds in Turkey as a minority. Oran was given close police protection over the death threats he received after Hrant Dink was murdered.

- German publishers said on Wednesday Nobel-prize winning novelist Orhan Pamuk had cancelled a trip to Berlin and other German cities over concerns for his personal safety. On Thursday, Pamuk reportedly cancelled another trip to Belgium due to threats he received.

- Turkey's foreign trade deficit reached USD 51 billion in 2006, breaking a new record.

International News

- An EU delegation visits Turkish Cyprus to research possibilities for direct trade through Famagusta port.

- Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis will hear the problems of Muslim Turks during a visit to Western Thrace on February 5-6.
- Iraq has invited Turkey to join a March meeting of neighboring countries in Baghdad. The US reportedly opposes that Iran and Syria be invited to the meetings.
- Former State Secretary James A. Baker III called on the Bush administration to open dialogue with Syria which would eliminate a major hurdle for peace, Hamas' refusal to recognize Israel.
- British police have arrested nine suspects in a major security swoop which involved a plot to kidnap and kill a Muslim British soldier.

<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/ankara/>

WILSON